

Sept., 1968

This past summer, some of my neighbors and I placed some Sierra Club fact sheets regarding the proposed development of Mineral King, some petitions opposing the proposed development there, and some bumper strips, "Keep Mineral King Natural" in and on my mail box at Faculty Flats near Mineral King. We also placed signs at both approaches to the mail box urging people to sign a petition, take a bumper strip, and help save Mineral King. We did this with the knowledge of the local ranger, and were not aware that we were in violation of the law.

We felt it only fair that we have some method of informing the public since the Forest Service had never allowed a public hearing regarding the appropriateness of this proposed private development on public land, and since material regarding the proposed development, printed by Disney Enterprises had been openly displayed at the Mineral King Guard Station.

We felt our signs were in good taste. None of them were nailed to trees, as are the Forest Service Game Refuge signs. None were painted on rocks, as is the huge black aerial survey marker which the highway department has painted across one of the most lovely examples of glacial polish in the area. Our signs were inked on temporary cardboard cartons. Many people were taking bumper strips and signing petitions.

On the morning of Friday, Sept., 6, about two weeks after we had put the material on display, I saw a Forest Service truck stop near our mail box. A ranger (not the local ranger) got out and took pictures of the display and the signs. He then put the signs in his truck and proceeded to remove the other material, including several pages of filled petitions. When I asked him to return my petitions, he offered no explanation or no legal documents of search or seizure. He merely said that I would have to see the District Ranger at Springville. When I stated that I was there without a car, and had no transportation to Strongville, he merely reiterated that I would have to contact the District Ranger. In all, he confiscated approximately 75 - 100 names and addresses on petitions, plus about 4 signs, several pages of Sierra Club fact sheets, and 12 - 15 bumper strips.

I felt that the confiscation of material in this manner by the Forest Service was arbitrary and in poor taste, at best, and perhaps illegal. We did not contact Mr. Warner at that time, but after we returned home from our vacation, we received a letter of explanation.

2023.009.0063a

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOREST SERVICE
Sequoia National Forest
P.O. Box 391
Porterville, California 93257

REPLY TO: 2720 Permits

February 6, 1969

SUBJECT: Special Use Residence - Dr. Richard Koch, West
Mineral King Tract

TO: Mrs. Richard Koch
6334 West 80th Street
Los Angeles, California 90045

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED



You asked Ranger Bob Werner to send you the enclosed petitions, signs, and bumper stickers which his trail foreman picked up near your summer home last summer. The material was here in this office, so I am sending it on to you.

All signing on National Forest land, whether along roads or elsewhere, must be under permit. It is normal for our field people to remove temporary signing whenever it is found. It is astonishing how many home-made signs, directional and otherwise, appear in recreational areas on summer week-ends and are removed by forest workers.

Since the removal of these signs and the attached petitions has caused you concern, I sincerely wish our employee at Mineral King had contacted whomever placed the material and asked him to remove it. He apparently was not specifically requested to do so and instead removed the material as was normal for unpermitted signing. I sincerely regret the bad feelings which apparently have developed over this situation. This type of action and reaction does neither of us any good in the long run.

I look forward to the spring and a chance to meet you and Dr. Koch. Perhaps we could all profit from an objective discussion of the future of Mineral King.

M.R. JAMES
Forest Supervisor

Enclosures

2023. 009. 00635

6334 W. 80th St.
Los Angeles, Calif 90045
February 11, 1969

M.R. James, Forest Supervisor
Mr. James, Head Ranger
Sequoia National Forest
P.O. Box 391
Porterville, Calif. 93257

Dear Mr. James:

Thank you for sending the petitions and bumper strips which I requested.

In reply to your letter, in my correspondence with Mr. Werner I have not indicated bad feelings toward him. I realize that Forest Service policies and many decisions are made in Washington. This is unfortunate in many cases such as Mineral King where I am sure some of the people who have made decisions are really not aware of the real nature of the area or of the disastrous results which are very real possibilities. If Mr. Werner feels that bad feelings have resulted, I am sure it is because he realizes that the confiscation of property is a far different matter than the removal of temporary signs. Surely Forest Service employees must realize that citizens have the right to petition their government.

I wish to request a permit to have signs and petitions available next summer at Mineral King from the middle of June until the middle of September so that the people who actually use the area will have an opportunity to express their wishes. This seems fair as material regarding the proposed Disney development was on display all last summer at the Mineral King guard station. Can you advise me on the proper procedure for obtaining such approval?

Sincerely,

Mrs. Richard Koch

cc: Alan Cranston
Michael McCloskey
Robert Werner

Jerome Waldie